

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:WBCOOTE:SM X29742

APPROVED BY P:MR; SISCO

NASA:MR. FRUTKIN

L/AF:MR. WALLIS

S/S: JPMOFFAT

AF:JBLAKE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 176491

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NASA, PFOR, MA, US

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF NASA STATION

REF: TANANARIVE 1299; TANANARIVE 1304

1. YOU SHOULD SUBMIT FOLLOWING NOTE TO MOFA IN REPLY TO ITS NOTE OF JULY 22.

A. QTE (COMPLIMENTS)... AND WISHES TO REFER TO THE MINISTRY'S NOTE NO. 75 AE/SG/CF OF JULY 22.

B. THE EMBASSY REGRETS THAT THE GOMR, AFTER HAVING FIRST INFORMED THE EMBASSY THAT IT WOULD PERMIT NASA EMPLOYEES ACCESS TO THE NASA TRACKING STATION AT IMERINTSIATOSIKA TO REMOVE U.S. PROPERTY WHICH IS REQUIRED FOR USE ELSEWHERE, HAS NOW STATED THAT IT WILL NOT ALLOW SUCH ACCESS TO THE STATION FOR THIS PURPOSE.

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C. THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO INFORM THE MINISTRY THAT THE USG DOES NOT ACCEPT ANY CLAIM BY THE GOMR THAT AN AGREEMENT REGARDING THE TRACKING STATION HAS BEEN BROKEN THROUGH THE FAILURE OF NASA TO PAY RENT, OR THAT

THE U.S. HAS IN ANY WAY ACTED IN BAD FAITH CONCERNING NASA'S OPERATIONS IN MADAGASCAR.

D. THE EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO CALL THE GOMR'S ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, SIGNED IN OCTOBER 1963, EXPIRED IN DECEMBER 1973 ALONG WITH THE SUBSEQUENT EXTENSIONS. THE ONLY AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO A RENTAL PAYMENT IS CONTAINED IN THE DRAFT TEXT (NEVER CONSUMMATED) OF A NEW AGREEMENT DISCUSSED WITH THE GOMR IN NOVEMBER 1974. THAT TEXT WOULD HAVE COMMITTED THE USG TO PAY DOLS. 100,000 PER YEAR FOR RENT BEGINNING IN 1973 PROVIDED THE GOMR AGREED TO UNINTERRUPTED OPERATION OF THE STATION TO THE END OF 1976. EACH COMMITMENT WAS TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN CONSIDERATION OF THE OTHER. IT IS NOT CORRECT TO SPEAK OF A RENT OBLIGATION STANDING ALONE WITHOUT A RECIPROCAL OBLIGATION ON THE PART OF THE GOMR TO PERMIT STATION OPERATIONS THROUGH 1976.

E. IT NEVERTHELESS REMAINS THE DESIRE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO SEEK AN EQUITABLE SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM. IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO INFORM THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT OF ITS WILLINGNESS TO HOLD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE AFOREMENTIONED NOTE FOR THE PURPOSE OF SEEKING A SOLUTION SATISFACTORY TO BOTH SIDES.

F. ACCORDINGLY EMBASSY WISHES TO INFORM THE GOMR THAT THE USG IS GIVING FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO THE CONTENTS OF THE AFOREMENTIONED NOTE OF JULY 22 AND WILL SHORTLY BE SENDING ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE EMBASSY AS A BASIS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

G. (COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE)...UNQTE.

2. FYI: WE WOULD PREFER, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, THAT CHARGE
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HOLD OFF DELIVERING NOTE TO GOMR UNTIL ALL NASA EMPLOYEES AND DEPENDENTS HAVE DEPARTED COUNTRY. HOWEVER, CHARGE HAS DISCRETION TO DELIVER NOTE EARLIER SHOULD HE DEEM SUCH ACTION ADVISABLE. POSITIVE TONE OF NOTE IS CALCULATED TO GIVE TIME TO OBTAIN DEPARTURE OF ALL U.S. PERSONNEL.

3. IT IS DEPARTMENT'S AND NASA'S HOPE THAT GOMR MAY BE WILLING TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION AND RELEASE MOST ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT WHEN THEY ARE AWARE HOW MUCH OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT NASA IS WILLING TO TRANSFER TO THEM. SUCH LIST IS CONTAINED SEPTEL. SHOULD CHARGE DELIVER NOTE PRIOR TO DEPARTURE OF ALL NASA EMPLOYEES,

HE SHOULD REFRAIN FROM SHOWING OR REFERRING TO THIS LIST
AT TIME HE PRESENTS NOTE. ON OTHER HAND, IF HE WAITS
UNTIL EMPLOYEES HAVE GONE, NOTE (MINUS FINAL SUBSTANTIVE
PARAGRAPH) PLUS LIST OF EQUIPMENT MAY BE DELIVERED
SIMULTANEOUSLY TO APPROPRIATE GOMR OFFICIAL. END FYI.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPACE STATIONS, CLOSURE OF OFFICES, DIPLOMATIC NOTES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE176491
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/E:WBCOOTE:SM X29742
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750258-0007
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507106/baaaaqje.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <12 DEC 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, MA, US, NASA
To: TANANARIVE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006